

# WORKING DRAFT

## STATEMENT OF WORK

### Strategic Partners in Education and Training

#### Department of the Treasury Internal Revenue Service

## 1. Background

1.1 Large-scale change is in process at the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). The Revenue Restructuring Act of 1998, a catalyst in this process, has laid the foundation for modernizing the IRS into an organization that will deliver top quality service to America's taxpayers. Flowing from the RRA '98, and subsequent comprehensive studies and analyses, are a new IRS mission statement, guiding principles and goals, as well as revamped business practices and new measures of organizational performance. Implementing the IRS's comprehensive modernization plans will entail moving functions into new business units, reorganizing into customer-focused operating divisions, and incorporating new technologies.

Success in accomplishing these operating and business changes will require comprehensive training and education of the Internal Revenue Service workforce. Employees will need to upgrade their skills, and/or acquire new job skills through myriad technical and professional development opportunities. Top notch training and employee development opportunities also are needed to meet IRS' commitment to hiring, retaining, and developing the highest quality workforce possible, particularly in this rapidly changing environment.

1.2 The Strategic Human Resource (SHR) function is coordinating the effort to implement the IRS modernization objectives to provide the work force the highest quality technical, professional and executive training and education. SHR is providing the leadership to implement best practices in education and training. It is developing the strategy and coordinating a wide range of learning activities across the IRS.

1.3 The IRS's Chief Human Resource Officer is leading development of human resource management and development programs to integrate the latest information and performance technologies. These new technologies will support the organization in creating a continuous learning environment.

1.4 In a recent study IRS identified a potential shortfall in its capacity to fully train the workforce to meet the expectations of modernizing the IRS and providing sustained quality training. Through these strategic alliances the IRS expects to close any gaps by leveraging partner resources, particularly to enhance its delivery capabilities, and the infrastructure.

## 2. Purpose

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2.1 The IRS Office of Strategic Human Resources (SHR) seeks to establish strategic alliances with institutions of higher learning and corporate universities in the United States. Inherent in these partnerships is a willingness for open communication, respect, and a commitment to improve continuously the relationships and the benefits accrued to all parties. Partnerships provide an effective vehicle for IRS' sustained pursuit of quality improvement and continuous learning.

2.2 The IRS is seeking partners to provide cutting-edge knowledge in the field of adult education and performance technology to support achievement of the IRS' strategic objectives.

2.3 These partnerships are intended to meet an ongoing need for expert curricula design and delivery of training via traditional and distance learning technologies that will enhance the overall quality, productivity, and capability of the IRS workforce. The goal is to pursue sustained quality and continuous learning to meet the educational and training requirements of the workforce through application of the Instructional System Design (ISD) process which includes assessment, analysis, curriculum design, development, implementation, delivery, and evaluation.

### 3. Academic Partnership

3.1 An academic partnership is a strategic alliance that enables the IRS to partner with leaders in adult education from institutions of higher learning and corporate universities in the mutual pursuit of continuous improvement in work force performance required to meet specific business needs.

3.2 As these alliances continue to evolve, the roles and responsibilities of all partners will continuously be refined and grow

- The IRS must manage its operations in such a manner as to be enable the highest level of responsiveness to the taxpaying public, external stakeholders, the business community, its workforce, etc.
- Colleges and Universities are interested in long-term associations to generate income as well as to align their curricula to the ever-changing needs of industry and government.
- All partners gain from creating a bridge between the academic and business/government environments by bringing together experts from both arena to address "real world" business issues.
- Joint participation in training, education, and distance learning workshops, seminars and/or conferences sponsored by academia, industry, and the IRS unifies the government, business and academic alliances.
- The opportunity for the IRS to consider partner graduates for job placement opportunities and/or internships would increase the applicant pool and sources of well-qualified job candidates.

3.4 All partners benefit from leveraging knowledge and talent, and sharing resources whether they are a **government** or corporate entity, a College/University, or a professional association.

- The **IRS** benefits by:
  - Having access to research centers at academic partner locations;
  - Having access to a variety of well-designed certificate, degree, and non-degree programs to offer its employees to build required job competencies
  - Maximizing and expanding its learning capacity by sharing partner resources, in particular, its distance education capabilities
  - Capitalizing on a trained network of full time academicians and business partners engaged full time in the business of equipping students with essential work force skills and competencies
  - Having an opportunity to “test” the benefits of a variety of instructional approaches and delivery modes in a structured educational environment
  - Applying new tools and technologies
- Universities and colleges benefit by:
  - Supporting the country’s tax agency in providing the highest quality service to taxpayers through a well-trained, professional workforce
  - Capitalizing on the knowledge and experience of a professional workforce in helping students under the practical application of the content learned
  - Having access to subject matter experts in the business environment;
  - Applying research and academic expertise to a variety of critical business issues/situations presented by the IRS;
  - Gaining real-world experience to leverage in the classroom environment.

3.5 Learning and performance measures are important **IRS** concerns in establishing clear outcomes for investing in employee education. To reap all possible benefits whether they are from researching, exchanging, supporting or using new methods and technologies, all partners must specify their expectations of outcomes.

- Expectations of the IRS:
  - Invest in knowledge and technological advancement.
  - Be flexible, adaptable, and open to different approaches.
  - Collaborate with partners for:
    - a team approach to problem solving;
    - continuous improvement of business practices; and
    - ‘best practices’ implementation.
  - Use project management principles, concepts, and management tools.
- Expectations of University/College
  - Learn the IRS business to include its mission, strategies, plans, objectives, initiatives, priorities, and expectations.
  - Be proactive, flexible, creative, and open to new approaches to improving IRS training and employee development programs

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- Sustain partnership commitments through continuous involvement of institutional leaders and expert faculty
- Maintain a problem-solving and continuous process improvement focus.
- Collaborate with IRS on new initiatives, process improvement, evaluation and implementation using a project management focus and approach.

3.7 All partners in a strategic alliance must agree upon the strategy and focus of the relationship by sharing visions, identifying expectations, agreeing upon roles, responsibilities, and deliverables, sharing risks associated with each venture, committing the required resources to ensure success and a quality product.

#### 4. **Partnership Roles and Responsibilities**

##### 4.1 Roles and Responsibilities of the University/College partner:

- Learn and understand the mission, goals, enterprise, structure and functions of the IRS;
- Demonstrate the value of the partnership to the IRS by providing expert curricula and/or other products
- Ensure continued commitment by the institution's leadership to the partnership relationship;
- Commit the resources required to fulfill the expectations of the partnership;
- Use a problem-solving approach when defining IRS learning and education strategies;
- Research and document the expected benefits of proposed initiatives and practices, to include but not limit to, reduced costs, enhanced trainee performance, and increased learning retention and transfer, etc;
- Identify and facilitate the application of research finding, and/or options for research opportunities which would help the IRS achieve key workforce learning goals, fulfill strategic objectives, etc.
- Use resources to facilitate interaction of IRS staff with consortia in which the partner may be engaged;
- Identify academic or other resources that may support achievement of IRS workforce learning goals and/or other human resource development strategies;
- Provide current and future education curricula which incorporate optimum delivery methods, including distance learning;
- Ensure that faculty with the right skills and/or competency mix are committed to the relationship with the IRS;
- Provide IRS with a listing of faculty that will be committed to working with the IRS and information about their area(s) of expertise;
- Collaborate with IRS to achieve its goal to become a learning organization;

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- Integrate leading edge technology and media into instruction consistent with IRS infrastructure;
- Provide best practices and up-to-date advice/counseling on a wide range of performance technology issues such as the systems approach to training, adult learning theory, learning styles, innovative training methods, distributed learning, and knowledge management;
- Identify learning and information technologies of potential value to the IRS and arranging for demonstrations or exhibits with appropriate activities and agencies in government, industry and academia;
- Incorporate quality and systems principles in the design, development, delivery and evaluation of training programs as outlined in the IRS Training Development Quality Assurance System (TDQAS); [Available upon request]
- Design and deliver “train the trainer” programs as needed;
- Assign points of contact for process and project management activities.

### 4.2 Roles and Responsibilities of IRS

- Educate the universities in an understanding of IRS business, key issues, and strategic initiatives;
- Commit appropriate resources to accomplish an effective partnership
- Define the core competencies required for IRS occupations;
- Assist university partners in identifying various levels of knowledge required for different career tracks and career path levels;
- Facilitate the integration of faculty capabilities into the IRS corporate structure involved in design and delivery of courses materials, the resolution of business issues, as appropriate;
- Evaluate program as well as course design and development activities to assure IRS’ needs are met;
- Communicate the capabilities and resources available within the IRS technology infrastructure for supporting the partnership initiatives;
- Provide facilities for instruction;
- Provide instructors, subject matter experts (SME’s) to collaborate with external partners on key workforce learning projects;
- Provide project management

## 5. Scope.

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5.1 A major focus of this effort will be to establish long-term strategic partnerships that will support the IRS through its modernization period and beyond. This will facilitate and enhance the provision of analytical and technical support in curricula design and development, instructional design and delivery, and tailoring of academic coursework (for use and integration with ongoing IRS technical, professional, and executive development learning programs). **Academic** partnerships will seek to capitalize on the range of capabilities and expertise available in universities and corporate **institutions**. The IRS intends to utilize developments in distributed learning and information technology to the greatest extent possible to expand its own infrastructure. Additionally, the IRS will collaborate on projects with its academic partners to make the unique knowledge and learning environments resident in its strategic partners available to as many IRS employees and remote sites as possible to expand workforce learning opportunities.

5.2 **Partnership** efforts will include strategic planning on human resource and workforce development objectives; information sharing and awareness; support for major studies addressing workforce learning, analyses; and assisting in performing a quality assurance function across the spectrum of IRS learning activities. These efforts will provide analytical and technical support on three complementary areas:

1. The refinement of appropriate training needs assessments will permit the IRS to focus on the most critical learning requirements and optimize the resources and services provided by the IRS and its partners.
2. A review of the current state of the art in advanced instructional methods and techniques will seek to optimize and standardize the use of both **IRS** technical resources for learning as well as utilize and promote the availability of information technology resources in academia and industry.
3. **Collecting, analyzing, evaluating and disseminating the best distance learning tools, content, and open architecture standards and practices will allow the IRS to meet timely continuous training and education needs of the workforce by allowing the selection of the most advantageous distance learning tools, content, and open design standards.**

5.3 Other Strategic Partner activities may include but are not limited to:

- **Participating in training, education, and distance learning organization workshops, seminars and/or conferences in academia, industry, and the IRS;**
- **Identifying evolving learning and information technologies of value to the IRS and arranging for demonstrations or exhibits with appropriate activities and agencies in government, industry and academia;**

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- Providing additional learning programs and activities to meet IRS needs.

5.4 Partners will maintain liaison with the IRS Human Resource Office to include the Director of Learning & Education, the Director of Leadership and Organizational Development, Director of Career Management, and points of contact established for the development and growth of these strategic alliances.

### 6. Services and Deliverables

6.1 In seeking to establish and formalize learning relationships with a carefully selected network of academic partners, the IRS intends to capitalize on available technology in creating a work environment that promotes ongoing learning and continuous competency development. In using technology-assisted training whenever possible, we expect to increase productivity by supplying employees with timely, consistent, and accurate information to do their jobs. Actual information at the moment of need (“just-in-time”) will optimize the quality of service to IRS employees.

#### 6.2 Work/Activity Areas:

1. Training Needs Analysis
2. Population and learning analyses
3. Job, and task analysis
4. Curricula and training plan design
5. Program, course, and courseware development
6. Training program implementation
7. Evaluation of training effectiveness (to include impact on job performance)
8. Program guidelines
9. Project plans
10. HR/Performance Consulting
11. Coaching/Mentoring

6.3 Program Areas: All assignments and projects must address one or more technical, management or skill areas such as shown below. The specific requirements of each task order will indicate the program area and the specifications to be addressed.

- Tax Administration
  - Tax Advocacy
  - Tax Law
  - Accounting
  - Tax Assessment
  - Tax Collection
  - Tax Auditing
  - Tax Research
  - Taxpayer Education

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- Tax Law Research
- Customer Service
- Leadership/Executive Development
  - Leadership Development Life Cycle
  - Organizational Development
  - Change Management
  - Business Ethics
  - Problem Solving
  - Program Development
  - Marketing
  - Financial Management
  - Management Concepts
  - Communication
- Human Resource Management
  - Labor Relations
  - Recruitment
  - Employee Relations
  - Program Development
  - Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)
  - Training
  - Counseling
- Career Management
  - Business Ethics
  - Problem Solving
  - Change Management
  - Program Development
  - Training management
- General Competencies
  - Researching
  - Negotiating
  - Stress Management
  - Problem Solving
  - Creative Thinking
  - Analytical Thinking
  - Communication
  - General Business
  - Project Management
  - Customer Service
  - Presentation Skills
  - Financial Management

6.4 Requirements: The following procedures, processes and guidelines will provide the fundamental parameters to be used in fulfilling the activities resulting from the confirmation of the task order issuances.

- All task efforts will use the Instructional System Design process as reflected in the IRS' Documents 7345 and 7353, 'Training Development

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Quality Assurance System' (TDQAS), for Managers and Developers respectively. Copies of this document will be provided upon request.

- 'Designer's Edge', by Allen Communications, will be used for the curriculum design process and as a front end development tool. The IRS will provide a template to be used with this tool that includes all the TDQAS information as well as embedded online reference links to IRS' Document 9477, 'Guidelines for the Development and Delivery of Technology-Delivered Training and Performance'.
- Standard authoring, development, and delivery tools must be used as specified.
  - ♦ Quest, Toolbook, or Authorware
  - ♦ Microsoft Office 97
  - ♦ Microsoft Project 98
  - ♦ Visio
  - ♦ Written approval for variations and/or additions of tools to be used on a project-by-project or product-by product basis
  - ♦ Application software and courseware/product delivery must meet Y2K compliance requirements
  - ♦ ICCC meta data tagging standards will be applied for association of learning objects within product development and delivery efforts for filing in an IRS courseware/course repository.
- Activities and products, with related administration, must be prepared to interface with specified IRS designated servers and administrative products. They will primarily be used in a WindowsNT environment.
- Knowledge and information will be provided to the IRS in the form of consultation, performance of studies, written reports, etc.

The selection of methods and media must be coordinated with the capabilities of the IRS to deliver to the designated IRS population via the available baseline technology.

### **7. Deliverables**

7.1 Provide concept papers, analyses, annotated briefings, and reports supporting conclusions and proposed recommendations on ways to integrate and implement partner developed courses/classes and learning technologies.

7.2 For selected courses and programs:

- Plan of Execution (POE): The Partner will draft version of a POE that covers course development and integration within IRS curricula.
- Course Descriptions: The Partner will provide a description of the academic instruction of the course and each section of instruction. The description

should include, but not be limited to, an overall synopsis; expected value added; method(s) of instruction; hours of instruction/activity; competencies emphasized; supporting materials; and completion requirements. Where applicable, the information will be entered into 'Designer's Edge' and both paper and electronic information will be provided to the IRS.

- Course of Instruction: For each course, the Partner shall provide a training support package in print and digital media (as appropriate), that includes learning objectives, lesson plans, audiovisual materials, instructor's guide, student's guide, reference materials, course support materials, job aids, advanced organizers, and tests (as appropriate).
- The Partner shall update the ACES course catalogue, or provide all the information necessary for the IRS to make the updates.
- Reports: The Partner will provide monthly written reports to the COTR addressing the status of work to date, and where appropriate, the Partner and the IRS manager will maintain or coordinate the maintenance of the Project Plan in MS Project 98.
- Quarterly Program Reviews: The Partner will provide quarterly program reviews and supporting reports to IRS principals as directed.
- Documentation and Source Codes will be provided to IRS for all products developed for or in conjunction with the IRS.
- Implementation and user guides will be provided.
- All plans, products, and deliverables will be the property of the IRS unless off-the-shelf or developed independently for the general use of the College or University.

## **8. Period and Places of Performance**

8.1 Development activities may be undertaken at a combination of Partner locations and IRS offices throughout the United States. The Task Orders will specify the locations of the activities.

8.2 Each Task Order will specify the negotiated timeframes for delivery of services and products.

8.3 Contract administration activities will be undertaken at the IRS Corporate Education office in Crystal City, Virginia.

8.4 Meetings will be determined for each Task Order as appropriate for the work being undertaken and should be at the convenience of the parties involved and be cost efficient. At all times the objective should be for timely development, delivery and completion in an efficient manner. Meetings will be primarily for planning, review, evaluation, ad hoc staff, and project team meetings.

**9. Special Provisions:**

9.1 Any products, programs, or reports designed or implemented will be the property of the IRS. Both hard and electronic copies of the design and/or products and outputs will be provided to the IRS. This includes implementing design applications and any redesigns that may occur during the contract for administrative support.

9.2 If the Partner uses ACES on a direct-access basis and has access to employee/nominee information, a security/privacy agreement must be signed by the vendor, and any designated onsite operator(s) must apply for security system access.

**10. Inspection/Acceptance:**

10.1 All deliverables and work performance will be reviewed for acceptance by the IRS Corporate Education project managers and, as appropriate, the COTR.

10.2 The COTR will review the deliverables for compliance with the contract awarded, and will approve for acceptance after the IRS Corporate Education team leaders have concurred on the acceptability of the product and/or service.

**11. Release of Information**

The Partner shall not disseminate any information concerning the specific project or the employees of the IRS without prior approval of the IRS.

**12. Performance Criteria**

12.1 Performance Period: The period of performance is one year from the date of award of the contract with four option years.

12.2 Place of Performance: The partner shall perform these tasks primarily from partner provided facilities.

12.3 Travel: Travel, as directed and approved by the IRS will be subject to the provisions of FAR 31.205-46, Travel Costs.

12.4 Other Direct Charges: University partners' charges and travel will be included in this category. Funding for recurring cost for general office supplies will be included in the price of the contract.

12.5 Government Furnished Equipment/Information: The government will provide access to available education and instructional material and information required for performance of the task orders. Software, if other than that specified for standard use in the SOW, a COTS and hardware acquired under this strategic alliance statement of work by the partner for completion of the tasks described by the SOW shall be regarded as Government property [NEEDS PROCUREMENT INPUT – We already own or have site and maintenance licenses for the COTS that we specify be used and have no need to purchase more We also purchase our own hardware/equipment and would need to concur

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in the purchase that would extend the architecture of our system because our goal is to make any program usable on standard NT servers and in an open architecture environment. Also need to address partners' rights to TDQAS templates and online Technology research information for use beyond IRS contracts.]

12.6 Data Rights: All data produced and products resulting from this statement of work shall become property of the government. Course materials and curricula developed specifically for the IRS shall be regarded as Government property; however these materials and curricula may be applied or used in other courses taught by the institution with the written approval of the Contracting Officer. Standard catalogue or "off the shelf" course materials and curricular which were not developed specifically for the IRS will remain the property of the institution. [NEEDS PROCUREMENT INPUT – need to consider open market, primary audience, FOIA, etc.]]

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Some information that should be included in the purpose or scope.

The IRS expects these external partnerships with colleges and universities to include relationships that will bring about the exploration of best practices; provide consultation services; and design, develop, and deliver training.

Partnership approaches:

1. What they can bring to / provide to the IRS as a integral partner to benefit both the College/University and the Agency  
What the IRS can provide to the educational institution to make this a two-way exchange of information and enhance the relationship between them